

Document 74 of 121

ENVELOPE

CDSN = LGX561 MCN = 93228/17402 TOR = 932281656
RTTUZYUW RUEKJCS5657 2281656-UUUU--RUEALGX.
ZNR UUUUU

HEADER

R 161656Z AUG 93
FM SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
INFO RUEADTS/USDP:DTSA
RUEALGX/SAFE
R 161156Z AUG 93
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEAHOF/CDRPERSCOM ALEX VA//TAPC-PEZ/DAPE-ZB-TFR-H//
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2674
INFO RUEADWD/DA WASHDC//DAPE-ZB-TFR//
RUHQHQE/CDR JTFFA HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//OJCS-PW/MIA/J5//
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 5156
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP-PW/MIA//
RULSND/NAVLGRU WASHDC
RUEHRA/AMEMBASSY RIGA 2565
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS 2570
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC// [REDACTED] (b) (3)
RUDMONI/ONI SUITLAND MD//ONI-61//
RUAGOTC/CINCUNC SEOUL
RUEHTL/AMEMBASSY TALLINN 2606
RUHVAAA/CDR USACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//TAPC-PEDR-H//
BT

CONTROLS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 025503

DEPT FOR EUR/ISCA AND EAP

E.O. 12356: N/A

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

TAGS: KPOW. MOPS, PREL. PHUM, RS
SUBJECT: POW/MIA: INTERVIEWS IN ESTONIA

REF A) TALLINN 550 B) MOSCOW 16060 C) TALLINN 725
D) TALLINN 1397

1. SUMMARY: JULY 31 AUG 3. 1993, TASK FORCE RUSSIA REPRESENTATIVE VISITED ESTONIA WHERE INTERVIEWS WERE HELD WITH FOUR ESTONIANS PURPORTING TO HAVE INFORMATION ON AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN THE SOVIET GULAG. AIN EENMAA SAID HE WAS HELD IN VORKUTA WITH AN ALLEGED WW II SERVICEMAN NAMED EISENHOWER IN 1950, BORIS UIBO MET TWO ALLEGED POWS FROM KOREA IN MORDOVIA IN 1952-54, HARRI VALDMAN SAW ALLEGED AMERICAN CIVILIANS IN VORKUTA 1945-55. AND LEO SIPELGAS MET TWO ALLEGED AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN KAZAKHSTAN IN 1954. END SUMMARY.

2. TFR REPRESENTATIVE JIM CONNELL VISITED ESTONIA JULY 31-AUG 3, 1993. WHERE HE INTERVIEWED FOUR ESTONIANS WITH INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE AMERICAN POW/MIAS. ON AUGUST 2, 1993, ACCOMPANIED BY TALLINN LOCAL NATIONAL PROTOCOL ASSISTANT TAIMI ALAS, CONNELL PAID A CALL ON GENNADI GRAMBERG, CHAIRMAN OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ESTONIA, FOR HELP IN FINDING ADDRESSES (TELE: (0142) 438-566). CONNELL AND ALAS THEN TRAVELLED TO SIMUNA. 170 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF TALLINN. WHERE TFR WAS MET BY AIN EENMAA AND BORIS UIBO. EENMAA SPENT 1945-55 IN VORKUTA AS A POLITICAL PRISONER. THE ONLY AMERICAN HE MET, HE SAID, WAS IN ABOUT 1950. THE PERSON WAS ALLEGEDLY AN ARMY OFFICER NAMED EISENHOWER WHO CLAIMED TO BE A DISTANT RELATIVE OF GENERAL EISENHOWER. EENMAA SAID THE PRISONER EISENHOWER CLAIMED HE WAS KIDNAPPED IN BERLIN BY THE SOVIETS. THIS EISENHOWER STORY HAS CROPPED UP PREVIOUSLY. MR. EENMAA LIVES AT EE2311 SIMUNA, LAANE- VIRUMAA, TELE: (0142) 32-67-296.

3. BORIS UIBO, PREVIOUSLY MISSPELLED AS ULBO, ELABORATED ON HIS ACCOUNT REPORTED IN REFTEL B. UIBO WAS ARRESTED AT THE AGE OF 16 IN 1950 IN VALGA, ESTONIA, WAS SENTENCED FEB 19, 1951 TO 25 YEARS, AND SENT TO CAMP NO. 18 NEAR POTMA, MORDOVIA. HE SAID CAMP NO. 18 WAS A CLOSE-HOLD CAMP FOR FOREIGN PRISONERS. UIBO SAID THAT SOMETIME IN 1952 HE MET AN ALLEGED AMERICAN NAMED GARY OR HARRY. ACCORDING TO UIBO, THE PERSON WAS DEFINITELY AN AMERICAN SHOT DOWN IN THE KOREAN WAR. THE "AMERICAN" AND UIBO WORKED TOGETHER MAKING WOODEN CHESS PIECES FOR ABOUT A YEAR. SOMETIME IN LATE AUTUMN, 1953, UIBO WAS TRANSFERRED TO A HOSPITAL IN CAMP NO. 9 AND EXCUSED FROM WORKING IN THE MINES, AND HE SAID HE LEFT "GARY" AT CAMP NO. 18. UIBO SAID SOVIET CITIZEN PRISONERS WERE PERMITTED TO WRITE TWO LETTERS PER YEAR IN RUSSIAN SO THEY COULD EASILY BE CENSORED, BUT FOREIGN PRISONERS, INCLUDING "GARY", WERE NOT PERMITTED THIS PRIVILEGE EVEN THOUGH THEY COULD HAVE GOT SOMEONE TO TRANSLATE THEIR LETTERS INTO RUSSIAN. HE SAID NO SOVIET WOULD TAKE THE RISK OF SENDING A LETTER ON BEHALF OF, OR MENTIONING. A FOREIGN PRISONER.

4. UIBO REPEATED HIS PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF "GARY" (REFTEL A) AND ADDED THAT GARY WAS NO OLDER THAN 25 AND,

LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, SMOKED. HE SAID THERE WAS A CONCERTED EFFORT BY THE RUSSIANS TO HIDE THE FACT THAT THEY WERE HOLDING FOREIGN PRISONERS. UIBO LAMENTED THAT ESTONIAN CAPTAIN PIK, WHO KNEW ENGLISH, OFTEN TALKED TO "GARY", BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, PIK IS NOW DECEASED.

5. UIBO SAID THERE WERE 6-7 THOUSAND PRISONERS, ALL MALE, AT CAMP NO. 18. HE HEARD THERE WERE AMERICAN PRISONERS FROM WW II THERE BUT HE NEVER MET ANY. HE SAID NORMALLY PRISONERS WERE KEPT AT CAMP NO. 18 FOR 21 DAYS, THEN DISTRIBUTED TO OTHER CAMPS, BUT HE AND "GARY" WERE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. TWICE A YEAR OFFICERS CAME AND SELECTED HEALTHY YOUNG PRISONERS TO GO WORK IN THE GOLD MINES. SICK PRISONERS FROM THE MINES WERE REPLACED AND WERE BROUGHT BACK TO CAMP NO. 18. UIBO SAID CAMP NO. 18 HELD CANADIANS AND GERMANS FROM WW II, JAPANESE FROM THE MANCHURIAN WAR WHO WERE ASSIGNED LAUNDRY DUTY AND OTHER LIGHT WORK, AND SOUTH KOREAN POWS WHO HE SAID WERE ALWAYS VERY ANGRY. THE RECORDS FOR CAMP NO. 18 AND OTHER MORDOVIA CAMPS WERE KEPT AT THE DIRECTORATE SOME 80-100 KILOMETERS AWAY. CAMP NO. 9 WAS

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 002 *****/

A HOSPITAL CAMP WHERE BOTH MALES AND FEMALES WERE KEPT. UIBO SAID THERE WAS A SEPARATE CEMETERY THERE FOR PRISONERS WHO DIED IN THE HOSPITAL. EACH REGULAR CAMP HAD ITS OWN CEMETERY. THE PRISONERS WERE BURIED IN GRAVES WITHOUT COFFINS, THEIR BODIES STACKED ON TOP OF ONE ANOTHER. HE SAID FAMILIES WERE SOMETIMES NOTIFIED THAT A PRISONER HAD DIED WHEN ACTUALLY HE REMAINED ALIVE.

6. SOMETIME IN THE WINTER OF EARLY 1954, AFTER RELEASE FROM THE 9TH CAMP HOSPITAL, UIBO WAS TRANSFERRED TO CAMP NO. 5 WHERE HE WAS ASSIGNED TO WORK IN THE POWER STATION. IT WAS AT CAMP NO. 5 THAT HE MET THE ALLEGED AMERICAN NEGRO PILOT DESCRIBED IN REFTEL A. HE SAID THE AMERICAN WAS QUITE TALL, MORE THAN 180 CM, SLIM AND ATHLETIC. HE WORKED IN A WOODWORKING SHOP WHERE THEY MADE FURNITURE FOR THE KREMLIN. HE HAD HEARD OF THE PILOT, WHOSE NICKNAME WAS AMERIKANETS, AND ONE DAY WHEN HE WENT TO THE WOODWORKING SHOP TO GET SOME MATERIALS HE SAW HIM. UIBO BELIEVES THAT THE AMERICAN PILOT WAS STILL IN CAMP NO. 5, WHEN UIBO WAS FREED ON MARCH 30, 1955. MR. UIBO NOW LIVES ON A FARM NEAR SIMUNA. HIS ADDRESS IS SIREVERE KULA (VILLAGE), LAEKVERE (PARISH) VALD, LAANE VIRUHAA (DISTRICT), ESTONIA, TEL. 0142-32-67-306.

7. IN THE EVENING OF AUGUST 2, TFR INTERVIEWED HARRI VALDMAN NEAR VORU. VALDMAN HAD BEEN CITED AS A POSSIBLE SOURCE OF POW/MIA INFORMATION BY GENERAL-LIEUTENANT YEZERSKY (REFTEL B). VALDMAN SAID HE DID INDEED SERVE TIME IN 10 DIFFERENT CAMPS IN VORKUTA BETWEEN 1945-1955, BUT DID NOT RECALL YEZERSKY, AND SAID HE HAD ENCOUNTERED NO AMERICAN POWS IN VORKUTA. HE SAID HE HAD HEARD THERE WERE SOME AMERICAN CIVILIANS THERE. HE REMEMBERED

SEEING WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS A GERMAN DIPLOMAT. JAPANESE, CHINESE, VIETNAMESE (INDOCHINESE), AND KOREAN PRISONERS. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY A CATHOLIC PRIEST HE SAID THE VATICAN HAD SOUGHT WORD OF, FR. LEONI ANGEL VALDMAN IS A RETIRED GEOLOGIST WHO LIVES IN TALLINN EXCEPT FOR SUMMER), AT RISTIKU ST. 2A, 4-3, TEL. 44-53-46.

8. ON AUGUST 3, TFR MET AT THE EMBASSY WITH LEO SIPELGAS, AN ACTIVIST IN THE ESTONIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSOCIATION, WHO WANTED TO AMPLIFY THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFTEL D IN WHICH HE TELLS OF BEING WITH TWO ALLEGED AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN STEPLAG, DZHEZKAZGAN CITY, KAZAKHSTAN. IN 1954. HE SAID ONE WAS WHITE, CALLED BILLY, AND HAD BEEN ARRESTED ON A LARK IN THE SOVIET SECTOR OF BERLIN IN 1951. ALONG WITH A FRIEND, WHO WAS BLACK. ACCORDING TO SIPELGAS, BEFORE COMING TO STEPLAG, THE TWO ALLEGED AMERICANS HAD BEEN AT TAISHET. SIPELGAS COULD NOT RECALL BILL'S FAMILY NAME EXCEPT TO SAY IT WAS A DIFFICULT NAME. ENGLISH OR GERMAN, PROBABLY, AND DEFINITELY NOT A COMMON NAME LIKE SMITH OR JOHNSON. SIPELGAS BELIEVES THAT EVEN IF HE RECALLED THE FAMILY NAME IT WOULD NOT HELP MUCH, SINCE HE BELIEVES IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BILLY'S REAL NAME. BESIDES. HE SAID, THE IMPORTANT IDENTIFIER WAS THE PRISONER'S NUMBER. SIPELGAS SAID HIS NUMBER WAS SU442. HE STRESSED THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE VERY INTENT ON HIDING THE FACT THERE WERE AMERICANS IN THE PRISON SYSTEM. HE BELIEVES THERE WERE AMERICANS NOT ONLY AT DZHEZKAZGAN BUT ELSEWHERE IN KAZAKHSTAN INCLUDING KARAGANDA, TSISKAZKHAN, BAIKONUR AND BALKHASH. (TFR COMMENT: TFR HAS INTERVIEWED FORMER PRISONERS WHO REFERRED TO AMERICANS AT ALL THESE SITES EXCEPT TSISKAZKHAN.) SIPELGAS PLANS TO TRY TO CONTACT AN ESTONIAN LAWYER NAMED HUGO AHONEN WHOM HE SAID MAY HAVE POW/MIA INFORMATION, AND TO USE THE ESTONIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSOCIATION NEWSPAPER. "MEMENTO" TO PUBLICIZE THE CAUSE. HE SAID HE HAD WRITTEN AN APPEAL FOR POW INFORMATION FOR "MEMENTO" BUT IT WAS YET TO BE PUBLISHED.

9. TFR THEN ATTEMPTED TO CONTACT VEIKKO PIIPARINEN, A FRIEND OF MR. VALDMAN'S, WHO HAD ALSO BEEN REFERRED TO TFR BY GENERAL YEZERSKY. MR. VALDMAN HAD VALIDATED THE

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 003 *****/
SPELLING OF PIIPARINEN'S NAME AND HE WAS LOCATED THROUGH THE PHONE BOOK AT GONSIORI ST, 13, TALLINN, TEL. (0142) 430-434. PIIPARINEN, A FINNISH ESTONIAN, WAS NOT HOME, BUT EMBASSY TALLINN FOLLOWED UP AWD INTERVIEWED HIM ON AUGUST 5 (REFTEL D).

10. FOR EMBASSY TALLINN: TFR WILL ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE YOU A LIST OF CAMPS AND TIMEFRAMES OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO US. TFR WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD CONTACT MR. UIBO AND SEE IF CAPTAIN PIK (SEE PARAGRAPH 4) MIGHT HAVE KEPT A DIARY OR DISCUSSED HIS PRISON DAYS

WITH HIS FAMILY. CONNELL ESPECIALLY APPRECIATED THE
HELP PROVIDED BY DEBORAH KLEPP, VICE CONSUL, AND TAIMI
ALAS, WHO WORKED OVERTIME TO HELP TFR. TFR THANKS
EMBASSY TALLINN FOR ALL ITS ASSISTANCE.

11. TASK FORCE RUSSIA SENDS. PICKERING

ADMIN

BT

#5659

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